



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/646,507	08/23/2003	Jan Arthur Aune	03-0668	9659
8840	7590	04/19/2004	EXAMINER	
ECKERT SEAMANS CHERIN & MELLOTT, LLC ALCOA TECHNICAL CENTER 100 TECHNICAL DRIVE ALCOA CENTER, PA 15069-0001			HOANG, TU BA	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
				3742

DATE MAILED: 04/19/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/646,507	AUNE ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Tu Ba Hoang	3742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-4,7-9 and 11 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 5,6 and 10 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 23 August 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/16/03.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless —

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-4, 8, and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Savov et al (US 4,246,023). Savov et al shows all features of the claimed invention including an electrode arrangement for an electric slag melting or smelting furnace comprising at least one side wall contact 4a (or 16 as shown in Figure 3) extending into the furnace interior through a side wall of the furnace, wherein the side wall contacts 16 are electrically interconnected and are equally circumferentially spaced around the furnace side wall, the side wall contacts are carbon bodies such as graphite (column 3, lines 3-4), whereby an electric current passes from the vertical electrode 2a or 17 through the mass of slag 10a in the furnace interior to the at least one side wall contact, and the furnace bottom also includes a lining 5 or 15 comprising an electrical insulating refractory material.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Savov et al in view of Paton et al (US 3,838,200). Savov et al discloses all features of the claimed invention as set forth above except for the vertical electrodes are supplied with alternating current.

It is noted that the use of vertical electrodes in the furnace as disclosed is considered an intended use since the claims are directed to an electrode arrangement and process for heating thereof. However, in any event, the use of alternative current for the top or vertical electrodes is known and old, as evidence, Paton et al discloses the use of AC source 10 for providing alternative current to the vertical electrodes 3,4 in electroslag remelting. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize in Savov et al alternative current (instead of

Art Unit: 3742

DC current) as taught by Paton et al in order to cause current flow through electrodes and through the molten slag bath uniformly. It is also noted that to replace DC source in Savov et al by such AC source taught by Paton et al would be within the purview of obviousness to one having ordinary skill in the art.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: Paton et al (US 3,746,075) and Medovar et al (US 4,027,092).

Claims 5-6 and 10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art of record does not show or fairly suggest the side wall contact is hollow and defines an opening for feeding slag forming components.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tu Ba Hoang whose telephone number is (703) 308-3303. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri from 8:30AM to 5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's acting supervisor, Denise Pothier can be reached on (703) 308-0265. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Tu Ba Hoang
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3742

tbh
April 16, 2004